



## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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### Senior Transportation Program Seeking Volunteer Drivers

**Sanilac County** - Rural areas come with many transportation needs; most people need a vehicle to get to the grocery store or doctor's office. Take away a car or add a medical condition that does not allow driving, transportation is nearly impossible for many elderly people trying to age in place. In Sanilac County the elderly experience transportation struggles daily, looking only to have their very basic needs met. To try to meet the need of seniors, Human Development Commission (HDC) has a volunteer based program to help seniors in need of transportation assistance. HDC's Senior Transportation program uses volunteer drivers to take elderly residents to necessary medical appointments. Drivers may take customers to appointments in or out of the county.

The program meets the number one goal of transportation, but also has a few hidden benefits. Mobility declines, including transportation, are linked to depression, isolation, loneliness and reduced life satisfaction. Volunteers reduce this risks by making transportation a breeze and engaging the customers in light conversation.

While volunteers of any age can help out with the program, most of the current volunteers are part of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), sponsored by HDC. RSVP offers all kinds of volunteer opportunities to anyone over 55 years of age. "HDC's Senior Transportation program is a great need in our rural area, and for that reason RSVP has made it a priority for volunteers." said RSVP Manager Kristy Sutherland. "We are currently recruiting new drivers for Sanilac County's Senior Transportation program."

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is a one-stop shop for volunteer opportunities for people over 55 years old. Opportunities may be within Human Development Commission or at any other non-profit, school, or proprietary health care organization. In addition to the great feeling that comes with volunteering, RSVP volunteers may receive travel reimbursement, excess insurance coverage, special recognition, and lifelong friendships made from volunteer experiences.

Human Development Commission is seeking volunteers of all ages to help with the Senior Transportation program. For the safety of the customers, volunteers

must be licensed and insured and pass a criminal history background check. Senior Transportation drivers are reimbursed based on miles driven while volunteering. "You certainly cannot do it for the money, but it helps cover expenses", one volunteer noted.

Volunteer applications are available from HDC by calling 989-673-4121. "Sometimes a person's time is more valuable than any money," Sutherland concluded.

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